

Utopia is Possible by Kenzo. Photography by Vicki King

Neo-collectivism

Society is facing a mass re-organisation. United by values of empathy and community, consumers are shunning individualism in favour of alliances that redistribute power at scale.

But with offline systems failing, a new model presents great opportunity: Web3. In this digital laboratory, decentralisation reigns. Citizens identify as squads, profits are dispersed and community is king.

To genuinely place collectivism at the heart of their businesses, brands will make the radical move from sellers to coordinators, blurring the boundaries between how we define a company, a community and a collective.

HUMAN NEEDS

Attainment | **Belonging** | Curiosity

Fulfilment | Identity | **Purpose** | Security

GLOBAL DRIVERS

Evolving Demographics

Experimenting with new forms of affiliation, the community-curious next generation identify as group members as well as individuals.

: Two-thirds (67%) of young people in Britain would like to live under an explicitly socialist economic system

Source: Institute of Economic Affairs

Dislocated World

People are recognising the personal limitations of aligning career with purpose, and are finding life satisfaction in more localised communities.

: In Italy, China, Russia and the US, young people have found a positive association between collectivism and life satisfaction

Source: HSE University

Climate Change

We've shifted from individual micro-actions to larger, more collaborative ways of lessening climate change.

'[People] will show a collective willingness to adopt less environmentally harmful lifestyles'

Abigail de Kosnik, associate professor, University of California

Insight: 2022–2025

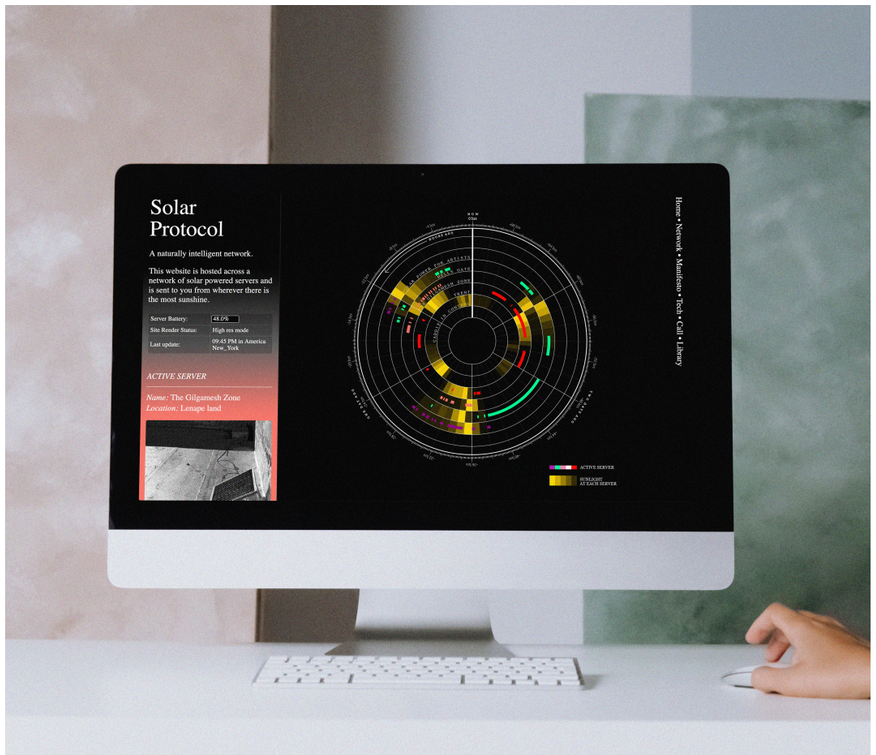


Clockwise from top left: Waygood, Australia; House of Aama Salt Water spring/summer 2022 collection. Photography by Myles Loftin, US; Solar Protocol by Tega Brain, Alex Nathanson and Benedetta Piantella

‘The new normal will include a greater awareness of systemic dependencies and the need for social goods’

Greg Sherwin, vice-president of engineering, Singularity University





Next-door Commerce

The pandemic reinstated the act of popping to a neighbour’s house for provisions, but these casual transactions are now being formalised for the masses.

: 73% of respondents in a US survey said that neighbours are their most important community

Source: Nextdoor

Humanity Hospitality

As the platforms that promised to disrupt the hospitality sector begin to resemble corporate monoliths, family-style services that nurture local communities as well as guests are emerging.

‘Hotels should be these sites of imagination, this amazing amalgamation of people who would never ordinarily share the same space together’

Amahra Spence, founder, MAIA Group

People-powered Networks

Where citizens once relied on Silicon Valley powerhouses to spearhead better technologies, they are now taking control, forming human networks that rely on groups of people working in tandem.

‘The pandemic has strengthened our model of collaboration between people, government and the private sector’

Audrey Tang, digital minister of Taiwan

Care-mmunities

As decentralised care comes to the fore, the virtual realm is becoming a testbed for new forms of kinship that undercut toxic social media platforms.

: 58% of US Gen Z report two or more unmet social needs, compared with 16% of people from older generations

Source: McKinsey & Co

Wealth Squads

Web3 innovators are experimenting with the shared mechanisms of DAOs to disrupt the banking sector, allowing us to co-build wealth.

‘If we applied the best aspects of DAOs to co-ops, we could create a scalable solution to… massively transform home-ownership for low-income families’

Commonlands

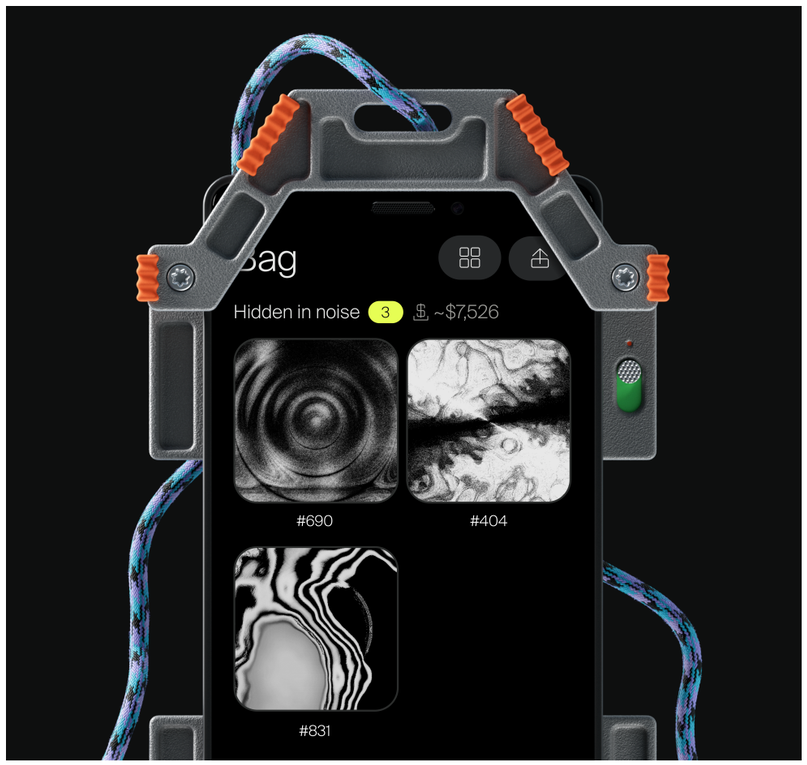
Unbound Brands

As leaders wake up to the vital role communities play in their success, their brands will be run by consumers as opposed to a central presence.

‘Let’s match community-focused behaviour with community-focused ownership’

Nathan Schneider, professor of media, University of Colorado Boulder







Clockwise from bottom left: Surreal app, branding by Facultative Works; La Sagrada Familia by Matthew Avallone, UK; Louis Vuitton Men’s spring/summer 2022 digital campaign

‘Our ability to form, grow and work through networks has never been more essential’

David Ehrlichman, author, Impact Networks

Foresight: 2026–2031



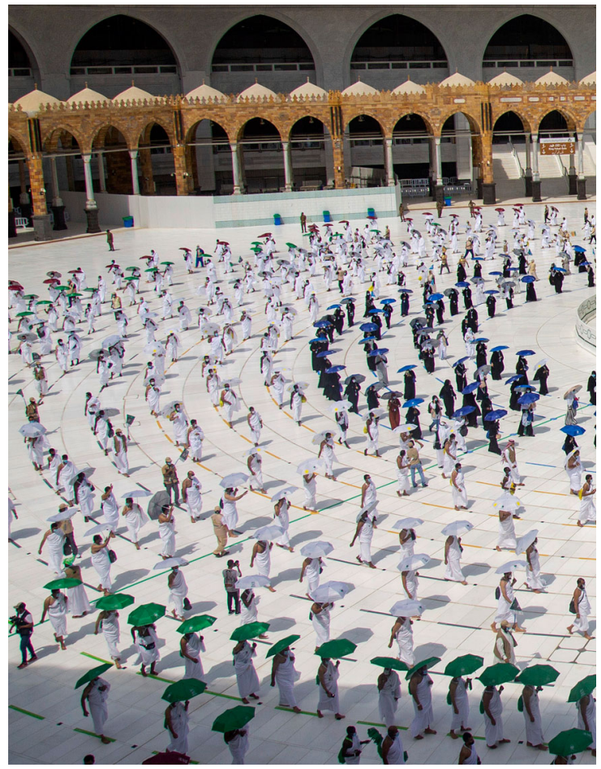
The Community Spirit by Wieden + Kennedy for Casa Lumbre,, Mexico



Zalando and Adidas, US



Wooyoungmi spring/summer 2022 campaign, South Korea



The Grand Mosque in Mecca by Muslim 3D, Saudi Arabia

Egoless Marketing

As individualism becomes less prominent among consumers, brands will follow suit and opt out of insincere self-marketing, becoming amplifiers of social justice movements instead.

: 53% of people around the world say they are willing to pay more for a brand that takes a stand

Source: Havas

Non-demographic Futures

The binaries of consumer demographics are no longer relevant, as citizens see themselves as members of wider, more complex groups.

‘People experience history differently based on their backgrounds… So throwing everyone together by year of birth often misses all the glorious conflict and complexity in social change’

Philip Cohen, sociologist

Everyman Internet

To help people capitalise on DAOs, NFTs and the metaverse, educational programmes will emerge to make these self-governed worlds more accessible to all.

: Almost two in five (38%) Americans are familiar with the metaverse, but just 16% can correctly define the term

Source: Ipsos

Post-family Kinship

As the family loses its position as the dominant emotional structure, the concept of the chosen family will allow us to look after one another while reducing our reliance on ancestry.

: Almost a quarter (23%) of India’s Gen Z are not interested in marriage or having children

Source: YouGov

Strategic Implications

Facilitate stakeholder collectivism

People are seeking an active stake in the brands they engage with, and expect businesses to prioritise the needs and growth of the community over financial growth. Re-examine the hierarchy of your business, shifting tangible power and control to the collective.

Offer fractionalised goods and services

Groups are self-assembling around shared financial and cultural values, while rejecting individualist systems. Create fractionalised and cooperative models within your business for squads to access high-value goods and services that would typically be impossible to achieve alone.

Align with niche consumer values

Rather than binary demographics that perpetuate stereotypes, people across borders are defining themselves by their collective attitudes. Ensure that your own brand values are aligned with your communities as well as the future direction of your business.



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REGIONS

North America | US

Community has acted as a lifeline for groups historically excluded from society. With the next generation of Americans the most diverse yet, we can expect a revival of these values.

: The number of white Americans has declined for the first time on record

Source: US Census Bureau

Asia | India

Following its Covid-19 emergency, India is ushering in a return to kinship, as people garner fulfilment from collective as opposed to individual endeavours.

: For 42% of young people in India, family has become an important source of happiness since the pandemic

Source: MTV India

Europe | The Netherlands

From shared neighbourhood boxes for leftover food to collectively fuelling green energy, Northern Europe has been at the forefront of new systems of solidarity.

: About 100,000 Dutch citizens participated in collective energy projects in 2021

Source: REScoop

MACROTRENDS

2015



Kenzo spring/summer 2015 campaign by Toiletpaper

New Bricolage Living

In 2015, our sense of identity began to fracture. As globalisation broke down borders, it also challenged the very notion of selfhood, allowing rootless individuals to engage with new nationalities and learn about collective ways of thinking.

2018



Let it Grow by Thomas Traum, UK

Post-growth Society

Three years later, the focus shifted from individual change to societal change. People questioned capitalism with increased intensity, prompting brands and governments to explore slower, more sustainable metrics of growth.

2019



Zalando sneakers autumn/winter 2019 by Superimpose, US

Community Commerce

It wasn't long before the retail sector responded to this push-back against conglomerates, creating dynamic channels for peer-to-peer retail, in which co-creation and micro-communities reigned.

2021



Dell XPS Youniverse by MPC and VMLY&R, US

Alternet Economies

The decentralised models of Community Commerce truly came to the fore last year, in line with the formation of a new internet – Web3. It's in this virtual new economy that collective ownership will thrive.

KEY SECTORS



Superself by Selfridges, UK

Retail

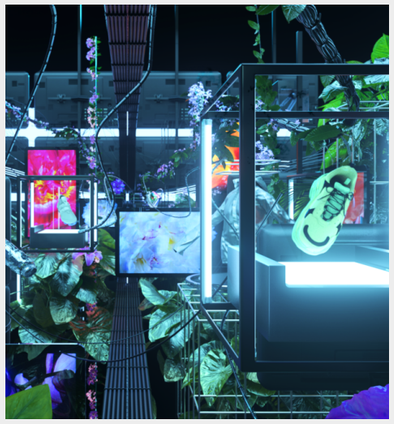
As consumers build their own platforms for sharing goods and services, consumption as we know it may come to a halt. Retailers will need to shift their focus from selling to coordinating, in turn boosting their eco-credentials



Adidas' new sports bra collection, Germany

Wellness

Mutual aid is no longer on the fringes of society. In the coming years, health and wellness brands will support consumers in performing rituals of community kinship, building both physical and digital spaces for care



Traum Inc and Studio Ongarato for STH BNK by Beulah, Australia

Technology

From a people-powered internet to DAOs, collectivism is prospering online. The media and technology sectors are well placed to explore fractionalisation concepts that benefit groups as opposed to individuals

THE : FUTURE : LABORATORY

This is a content summary of our forthcoming macrotrend, Neo-collectivism.

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